

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

Academic Dean's report for 2015 -2016

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Academic Committee (AC) has met on four occasions over the past year and this is my third Annual Report.
- 1.2 The composition of the Committee and attendance at meetings are given in the Registrar's Report.
- 1.3 The following report to the AC:
 - Forensic Science Subcommittee
 - Training and Education Subcommittee
 - Research Subcommittee
 - Conference Subcommittee
 - Curriculum Subcommittee
 - Sexual Offences Forum
 - Chief Examiner's Committee

Due to the repeated inability to find a chair for the Research Subcommittee, the Board agreed to close down this subcommittee and any requests for research funding etc. are considered by the AC. With the introduction of the new website, limited previous use and potential difficulties of moderating the Sexual Offences Forum, the Board also agreed to close this down. Details of changes to the function of the Curriculum Subcommittee are given later in this report.

- 1.4 The Academic Dean is also responsible for coordinating Faculty representation on external committees (see Appendix A) and I am very grateful to all those members who give their time and service on the various committees and provide feedback.
- 1.5 The FFLM publish a Bulletin on a frequent basis, which gives details of new events, consultations, courses, items of interest etc.

2. The Membership Examination

- 2.1 Dr Helena Thornton continues as Chief Examiner. The examination is a priority for the Faculty and therefore for the AC and Chief Examiner's (CE) Committee. Huge thanks are due to Jay Barton-Costa, who was appointed Examinations Manager and to Dr Thornton, ably assisted by her Deputies, the Leads, and the Examiners. Thanks are also due to Angela Hall and Keira Anderson and the team from St George's.

- 2.2 Mr Kevin Hayes, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, continues as External Examiner and he reviews all question papers and marks.
- 2.3 The Chief Examiner's Committee has met formally on four occasions over the last year, in addition to a number of teleconferences and much email traffic.
- 2.4 Part I of the Membership examination was held in October 2015 at the Park Crescent Conference Centre and Part II in March 2016 at St George's, University of London Medical School. In October 2015, 33 candidates took the Part I examination, 18 candidates passed. Of those that failed, 11 achieved the DLM pass mark and were awarded a DLM. There were 22 candidates for Part II in March 2016: 14 for general forensic medicine (GFM) of whom two passed; six for sexual offences medicine (SOM) of whom five passed; and two medico-legal advisers, one of whom passed.
- 2.5 The Board remains concerned about the low pass rate in Part II GFM. The Part II examination consists of a Short Answer Question (SAQ) paper and 14 station OSCE. Over the past year we have continued examination preparatory courses for both GFM and SOM, which concentrate on the OSCE examinations, and the pass rate for the GFM OSCE has remained reasonably high at 57%. However, it is the SAQ paper that candidates are continuing to find difficult to pass despite putting on a series of webinars specifically for GFM. Over the forthcoming year, it is planned to also develop an e-learning course for GFM and additionally, the Board have agreed that Part 2 passes from March 2016 can be carried forward to future years for a limited time (four years from passing the Part 1 examination) and it is hoped that this will lead to an increased overall pass rate.
- 2.6 13 examiners retired or resigned over the past year and four new examiners were appointed and have commenced training over the last year making a total of 37 examiners. Further adverts for more examiners have recently been made and the Board expects to appoint additional examiners shortly. Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all examiners.
- 2.7 The OSCEs and OSPEs have taken a great deal of work and all of the examiners continue to gain experience in writing, trialing, revising and rehearsing these with actors.
- 2.8 Angela Hall and the team at St George's, including the actors, have as ever been invaluable in ensuring the examinations, in particular the OSCEs and OSPEs, ran without a hitch. At the March 2016 Part II examination 36 different OSCE/OSPE stations were held. Special thanks are due to Ms Hall for her enduring patience in guiding us through the intellectual process, ensuring that the examination content was appropriate and that nothing was forgotten on the day, to Keira Anderson, who provides statistical analysis of all results and to Tessa Lewis and Jay Barton-Costa for ensuring everything ran smoothly.
- 2.9 All examiners have given up a large amount of time and effort to making the examination a success, especially so in the run up to Part II of the examination.
- 2.10 Following advice from our educational advisers, the number of questions in the Part I MFFLM has been increased from 125 to 150 and this examination is reverting back to the long term plans of being held twice per year (June and December).

2.11 The regulations for the membership examination have all been re-written over the past year and Jay Barton-Costa has introduced new procedures to facilitate applications and to enable equality and diversity information to be collected and monitored.

3. The DLM examination

3.1 The Diploma of Legal Medicine (DLM) was held in October 2015. This examination is open to all and is a knowledge test identical to Part I MFFLM but marked at a lower level. Any doctor passing Part I MFFLM will now automatically be awarded the DLM. 15 candidates sat the examination and 11 passed of whom 10 gained a distinction and will be exempt from Part I MFFLM, if eligible.

3.2 The regulations for the DLM examination have all been re-written over the past year and new procedures have been introduced to facilitate applications and to enable equality and diversity information to be collected and monitored. The examination will also revert to being held twice per year (June and December).

4. The Licentiate Examinations

4.1 Following negotiations with the Society of Apothecaries, the Diploma in Forensic and Clinical Aspects of Sexual Assault (DFCASA) transferred to the FFLM on 1 March 2014. The regulations were revised to incorporate FFLM policies and procedures and some further revisions were made in early 2016 to change the name to the Licentiate (SOM). The Part I examination was held on October 2015, 5 candidates sat the examination and all passed. Candidates who commenced the DFCASA before the change of name to the Licentiate will still be awarded the DFCASA and will remain eligible to apply for LFFLM.

4.2 The Licentiate (SOM) OSCE was held in March 2016. Candidates generally undertake the same OSCEs as the MFFLM candidates but the pass marks are set at a lower level. Four candidates sat the examination and 3 passed. Over the past year three candidates have completed and passed the DFCASA.

4.3 A new Licentiate examination for General Forensic Medicine (GFM) was introduced in 2014. This is set at a level of basic competence and is mirrored on the former DFCASA for Sexual Offence Medicine (SOM). No candidates sat the Part 1 Licentiate (GFM) in 2015. If candidates are unsure whether it is better to opt for the Licentiate or Membership examinations, they should contact the office and can be given advice from either the Chief Examiner or Academic Dean.

4.4 Both Licentiate examinations require an element of educational supervision. In order to comply with best practice and meet GMC requirements for July 2016, the FFLM put on a successful Educational Supervision course, in conjunction with the RCP Education Unit, in January 2015. There has been insufficient demand for the FFLM to put on a further course but generic courses can be readily accessed via our parent College. A database of trained Educational Supervisors has been developed such that it will be mandatory for Licentiate candidates to have a trained Educational Supervisor from July 2016 in order to comply with GMC requirements.

- 4.5 Following advice from our educational advisers, the number of questions in the Part I LFFLM has been increased from 125 to 150 and this examination is reverting back to the long term plans of being held twice per year (June and December).
- 4.6 The regulations for the licentiate examination have all been re-written over the past year and new procedures have been introduced to facilitate applications and to enable equality and diversity information to be collected and monitored.
- 4.7 Previously there are no exemptions for any parts of our examinations. The United Kingdom Association of Forensic Nurses (UKAFN) have developed Advanced Standards in Education and Training (ASET) as a competence framework for Advanced Forensic Practitioners working in sexual assault settings or custody settings and which are built into current forensic courses at Staffordshire University. One aspect of the latter is a case portfolio that is similar to our own Compendium of Validated Experience (COVE), which occurs in both our Licentiate examinations. We have undertaken a piece of work to mirror the two sets of competencies and the Board has agreed that the ASET could lead to exemption from the relevant COVE and vice versa. The ASET is the property of UKAFN rather than any specific university.

5. The Diploma in Forensic Human Identification (DipFHID)

- 5.1 This examination is run over two years in conjunction with the Professor Peter Vanezis from the Cameron Forensic Sciences Unit where a preparatory course for this examination is held.
- 5.2 15 candidates sat the Part 1 examination in October 2015 and all passed. 18 candidates completed the dissertation element of the examination and were awarded the DipFHID in August 2015.
- 5.3 The regulations for the DipFHID examination have all been re-written over the past year and new procedures have been introduced to facilitate applications and to enable equality and diversity information to be collected and monitored. The next examination will be held on June 2016.

6. Curriculum Subcommittee

- 6.1 The Board has agreed that a further attempt should be made to obtain specialty status and a preliminary meeting was held with the Department of Health in June 2015. A new Specialty Working Group has been established, chaired by Professor Carol Seymour, and work is in hand in preparing another Stage 1 application. An application is also being prepared to form a Specialist Advisory Committee of the Joint Royal College of Physicians Training Board (JRCPTB) in order to assist with this application and the development of a curriculum and as a result the curriculum subcommittee will no longer exist. This will be a major piece of work for the FFLM.

7. Conference Subcommittee

- 7.1 Dr Will Anderson has chaired the conference subcommittee and Will has gone to enormous lengths to ensure this year's conference is a great success. The subcommittee has met regularly by teleconference over the last year.

7.2 The 2017 conference will be held at the Hilton hotel in Belfast on 5-6 May 2017.

7.3 If you have any topics or suggestions for the FFLM Conference, please do let the Academic Dean or Chair of the Conference Subcommittee know.

8. Training and Education Subcommittee

8.1 The joint Introductory Training Course with the College of Policing in Durham was held in June 2015 and January 2016 with many students going on to complete a University Certificate in Postgraduate Professional Development awarded by Teesside University. In addition three additional courses were put on in London for the Metropolitan Police split over 2 weekends. A further course in Durham is planned for July 2016 and later in the year for the Met.

8.2 The following one-day courses have been held over the past year, the majority having been fully subscribed:

- SARC Best Practice Day
- Child Safeguarding Update Day
- Drink and Drug Driving Training Day
- MFFLM/LFFLM Exam Revision days (SOM and GFM)

I am very grateful for the hard work and enthusiasm of Will Anderson, Jenny Holmes and Rudo Masanzu in putting together these interesting and valued courses.

8.3 A detailed programme of other one day courses for the forthcoming year will shortly be available on the website and it is planned to have courses on:

- Drink and Drugs Driving -16 July 2016
- SARC Best Practice Day – 17 September 2016
- Child Safeguarding Update – 29 October 2016
- Mental health problems in Custody – 12 November 2016
- MFFLM/LFFLM (SOM) Exam Revision Day – December 2016
- MFFLM/LFFLM (SOM) Exam Revision Day – 13 January 2017

8.4 The committee continues to review and revise FFLM documents as required and welcomes feedback. All documents – guidelines, recommendations, proformas, fact sheets and policy statements are available on the website with a few that can be accessed in the Members' only area (open to Fellows, Members, Licentiates and Affiliates). The following documents have been published over the past year:

- Recommendations – SARC Best Practice Courses content guide
- Recommendations - Head injury guidance in police custody
- Recommendations – Care of Suspects of Sexual Assault in Police Custody
- Acute Behavioural Disturbance – guidelines for management
- Custody Officer Training Outline
- Provision of advice and help to those who have been raped or sexually assaulted abroad
- Quality Standards in Forensic Medicine
- Quality Standards for nurses and paramedics (GFM)
- Quality Standards for Doctors Undertaking Paediatric Sexual Offences Medicine (PSOM).

9. Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC)

9.1 The Subcommittee has met on two occasions in the last year and is chaired by Dr Margaret Stark who has worked hard to develop and extend the evidence base in forensic medicine.

9.2 The following documents have been produced over the past year:

- Recommendations for the Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects in July 2015 and February 2016
- Recommendations for the Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects – the evidence
- Labeling forensic samples
- Operational procedures and equipment for medical facilities in police stations
- Operational procedures and equipment for medical facilities in SARCs
- What happens now?
- Sexual Offence examination timing – pre pubertal complainants
- Sexual Offence examination timing – post pubertal complainants.

10. E-learning courses

10.1 The courses for Part 1 MFFLM, DLM, LFFLM(SOM) and part 2 MFFLM(SOM) will be reviewed later in the year and it is planned to develop a series of modules for Part 2 MFFLM(GFM) and LFFLM(GFM) over the forthcoming year.

11. Suspected Internal Drug Traffickers

11.1 NHS England declined to accept the suggestion by the FFLM and RCP to progress guidance on this subject via a literature review. The FFLM now plans to include advice on this subject with the review of the “Blue Book” *Substance Misuse Detainees on Police Custody – Guidelines for Clinical Management* planned for late 2016.

12. Webinars

12.1 A very successful first series of webinars on GFM topics was held in summer and autumn 2015 and another series is currently underway on a range of forensic and legal medicine topics. Work is underway to develop a FFLM video/webinar channel. I am grateful to all of those who gave up their time to help give these lectures.

13. FFLM Working Party for HCPs who work with victims of torture (HWVT)

13.1 A multidisciplinary working party has been established to develop appropriate quality standards for those who work with victims of torture and is co-chaired by Dr Juliet Cohen and Dr Peter Green.

14. FFLM Photography in Custody and SARCs (PICS)

14.1 Dr Will Anderson is leading on this initiative to create an accredited course with the Defence School of Photography in order to develop standards for the use of photography in forensic medicine.

15. Sexual Offences

- 15.1. In conjunction with RCPCH we have now published been a *Service Specification for the Clinical Evaluation of Children & Young People who may have been Sexually Abused*. One of the key points of the publication was that it recommended that young people under age 18 should always have an assessment by a doctor. As expected this had an impact on our joint guidance with UKAFN in respect of nurses undertaking SOM examinations and the DFCASA. This has resulted in UKAFN withdrawing from the joint guidance and it has therefore been removed from our website. The former DFCASA regulations and our LFFLM examination regulations have been adjusted to reflect this best practice.

16. Conclusion

The past year has been an incredibly busy one for the Academic Committee but has been made easier by the hard work of our office staff: Charlene Campbell, Tessa Lewis and Jay Barton-Costa. The FFLM is now well placed to move forward with increased training opportunities, more frequent examinations and a further bid for specialty status. This now completes my term of office as Academic Dean and I would like to also put on record my thanks to the other Senior Officers and Vice Presidents and the vast number of people, too numerous to mention on an individual basis, without whom my task would have been impossible.

**Professor Ian Wall FRCP FFFLM FRCGP FACLM FFCFM(RCPA) MFMLM DMJ
Academic Dean**

1 May 2016

APPENDIX A

Committee Representation (as at May 2016)

	ACPO Working Group on Rape and Adult Sexual Offences
Cath White	National SARC Advisory Board
	Medical Forensics Specialist Group
Linda Teebay	RCPCH Standing Committee on Child Protection
Ronnie Lowe	Domestic Violence expert group
Jenny Holmes	RCPsych Liaison Committee
	Nurse Liaison – UKAFN Steering Group
Jo Molony	National s12 Advisory Group
Jason Payne-James	ECLM
Kranti Hiremath	BMA Forensic Medicine Committee
Margaret Stark	RBMA Forensic Medicine Committee
Mac Ransom	Medical Informatics